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Editorial

THE delegates to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches have been provided with a handsome piece of home-work. We can hardly believe that they will dare to present themselves at Evanston without having read from cover to cover the recently published *History of the Ecumenical Movement*.[1] It is not only a handsome but a substantial volume, running as it does to over eight hundred closely printed pages. The delegates may indeed feel that its publication this year, when they must have much other home-work to do, is an ambiguous advantage. The rest of us, who can read it at our leisure and who can do some judicious skipping with an easy conscience, need have no misgivings in welcoming this pioneering and interesting contribution to the history of the universal Church.

It is the work of an international team of historians, and in fact no single author could have covered the field with the requisite knowledge and authority. The editors are to be congratulated on the way in which they planned and carried through an undertaking that had not been attempted before and that manifestly presented them with some practically insoluble problems. After an introductory chapter which deals in barest outline with "Division and Search for Unity prior to the Reformation", the volume falls into two parts: seven chapters are concerned with ecumenical ideas and activities between 1517 and 1910; and nine chapters with the more tangible movement that has developed since the World Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 ("until the end of the nineteenth century, it is difficult to speak otherwise than proleptically of an ecumenical 'movement' ", p. 727).

The story of endeavours after unity from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries will be more or less news to most readers, even as regards their own church and country. Until the facts were assembled in this comprehensive manner, no one could have realized how persistent had been the dissatisfaction with the disunity of Christians or how manifold the attempts to find a way of overcoming it. An astonishing number of tendencies, overtures and personalities that may fitly be called ecumenical are brought to light. In many cases the mention of them has to be so slight that it does little more than arouse curiosity. However, it appears that some of the chapters in this part of the book are much-compressed instalments of special studies which their respective authors have in preparation. These more detailed studies will be awaited with interest, and will be better appre-

[1] *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517–1948*. Edited by Ruth Rouse and S. C. Neill. S.P.C.K. 32s. 6d.

ciated now that it will be possible to perceive their place in a whole historic process.

Nevertheless, the second part of the volume naturally does much more to enlighten the problems and prospects of Christian reunion as they exist to-day, and here many readers will find themselves on tolerably familiar ground. But, to say the least, it is convenient to have a compact and reliable account of the various Ecumenical Conferences that have taken place since 1910, and to be able to see the inter-relations of "Faith and Order" and "Life and Work", etc. There is also a chapter by Bishop Neill on "Plans of Union and Reunion, 1910–1948", which classifies with great clarity the remarkable number of things that have actually happened during this period in the healing of divisions. The record amply warrants his assertion that "the forty years between 1910 and 1950 have achieved more towards the overcoming of differences between Christians, and towards the recovery of the lost unity of the Body of Christ, than any period of equal length in the previous history of the Christian Churches" (p. 445). However impatient one may feel at the present slowness of advance, one has to admit that the record of the last forty years, viewed in perspective, is extremely encouraging. As Dr Ehrenström says, "it is hard for anyone born after the beginning of the century to realize the extent to which in 1914 the Churches still lived in separation from one another" (p. 503). Every year more Christians who come to years of ecclesiastical discretion will be in that case, and the facts that are here displayed will come to them as something of a revelation.

It is the purpose of this History not to take sides in controversy but to supply as much reliable information as possible, and within the inevitable limits of a single volume it triumphantly succeeds. There is a useful, though of course only selective, bibliography, and an extensive, but not exhaustive, index. It would have taken little trouble and only a few extra pages to make the index as complete as it should be: for example, the *Revue Anglo-Romaine* (incorrectly entitled in each case) is mentioned three times but does not appear in the index.[1]

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Christian Deviations, by Horton Davies (S.C.M. Press, 7s. 6d.), is a book that we have often been asked to recommend, before even we knew of its impending appearance. It contains concise accounts of the following religious creeds or systems and an appraisal of each from an orthodox Christian standpoint: Theosophy, Christian

[1] The Editors did not make up their minds whether to speak of "the Abbé X" or "Abbé X", though they usually adopt the former usage. We would call their attention, and that of many other editors and authors, to a recent review in *Blackfriars* (February 1953, p. 102) which alludes to "the irritating practice of prefixing the definite article to 'Abbé' ". As the writer there says, "this word is a designation, not a description, and is comparable not to 'duc' but to 'père, général, professeur', none of which is rendered in English with the article when it precedes a name. 'The Abbé Bossut' (*sic*) is as incorrect as 'the General John, the Professor Smith, the Bishop Butt', or 'the Father Evans'."

Science, Spiritism, Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Mormons, British-Israel, Moral Re-Armament, Astrology, and Open-Air Religion ("I worship God in the Cathedral of the Pines and the Diocese of Nature"). Readers of THEOLOGY have already been able to sample the quality of the book, for we were allowed to publish last September the chapter on "Jehovah's Witnesses". The only suggestion we would make for future editions (which will certainly be called for) is that an ampler bibliography be supplied for the benefit of readers who need to prosecute their inquiries further into the history or tenets of any of these sects.

Our Legislative Assemblies

THE fact that at the present moment a duly appointed commission is reviewing the synodical government of the Church is sufficient evidence that there exists some doubt about the efficiency of our legislative machinery. The trouble is that there is too much of it. The system under which we labour is complicated, repetitive, and costly. Such of the clergy as are members of the legislative bodies may have to appear three times a year in Convocation, three times in the Church Assembly, and three times in their own Diocesan Conference. To this the Bishops have to add three attendances at their private "Bishops' Meetings", which although not legislative are so important that no Bishop would miss them willingly. It should be obvious that when all these are put together far too much time has to be devoted by religious leaders to other than purely pastoral concerns.

It would be wearisome to calculate how many commissions and committees some of these gatherings originate, involving still further expenditure of valuable time. Perhaps more interest would be aroused by an effort to calculate how much they all cost. When one takes into account the travelling expenses of members, the payment of stenographers, and the printing of agenda and records, it is probable that our method of procedure is as extravagant in money as it is in time. At any rate, in 1953 the two Convocations cost £3,400, and the Assembly £9,400, with another £1,300 for its commissions and committees.

Let us freely admit that, much as we complain, we should not like to turn the clock back and revert to the position of a century ago when we were almost devoid of legislative facilities. The fact that Convocation had not for 135 years been allowed to transact more than formal business had been largely responsible for the failure of the Church to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population. Even when Canterbury resumed its normal functions in 1852 and York in 1861 it can hardly be said that business was brisk. The Convocations still had to work hand-in-glove with Parliament, and as the obligations of Parliament increased, the needs of the Church were ignored or forgotten.

It was this state of things that led to the starting of the Life and

Liberty Movement and the epoch-making proposals for setting up machinery for partial self-government for the Church. Broad-based upon an electorate of Church members there were set up parochial church councils, ruridecanal and diocesan conferences and a National Assembly for the whole Church of the country. Measures dealing with the practical concerns of the Church were to be passed through the Assembly in much the same way as bills through Parliament. Thus passed they would be examined by an Ecclesiastical Committee of both Houses of Parliament and if no objection were raised they would in due course receive the royal assent. If objection were raised they would be debated and Parliament could reject them. Parliament was thus left with a power of veto, but not of amendment. The new scheme came into effect immediately after the first World War and has resulted in a tremendous spate of ecclesiastical legislation. Since the conduct of business was so expedited arrears have been made up and something like a revolution has taken place in Church affairs. The effect has been to give the Church some of the advantages of dis-establishment without its accompanying disadvantages.

All this is to the good. It must be remembered, however, that the Enabling Act, which set this new machinery in motion, left the rights of Convocation unimpaired. The four houses were still responsible for matters of faith and worship because such questions were regarded as the special province of the clergy. When, however, something of great spiritual importance, such as a revised Prayer Book, was in question, it was deemed advisable to have the concurrence of the Assembly, where the laity had a house of their own. In fact it has never been quite clear where the rights and duties of Convocation end and those of the Assembly begin. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the Convocations are provincial while the Assembly is national.

What has really happened is that we have imposed a modern democratic system on a medieval theocratic one, and the two do not easily dovetail together. The kind of difficulty that occurs can be illustrated not only from the sphere of organization but from that of interpretation. When lawyers are interpreting modern documents, such as wills or acts of Parliament, they do so in accordance with the strict and literal sense of the words used. They do not ask what was the intention in the mind of the testator or legislator, but simply what the document says. But when a canonist or liturgiologist is interpreting an ancient document he asks what was the meaning of the terms as originally employed, and this he can do only by examining the contemporary conceptual background. Thus when we read that baptism is "generally necessary to salvation" we are told that "generally" means "universally", and when we read "how necessary those Orders are in the Church of Christ" we are told that "necessary" means "useful"! We can understand why the lawyer does not want to be let in for that kind of argument.

The difficulty of interpretation extends to some of the Convocations' own choicest terminology. What is a "gravamen" and what purpose is it intended to serve? The proctors apparently don't know.

If my memory serves me aright, the last time they presented a gravamen to the Upper House they were told in effect that they had mistaken both the meaning and purpose of such a memorial, and that what they should have done was to move for a committee.

The opportunities for misunderstanding between the two Houses are legion. As they are expected to do their work *pari passu*, representatives of the Lower House must repeatedly be summoned before the Upper so that progress may be reported and business may be handed down. This of course must be done by word of mouth, a hideously uncertain method. Merely to offer the bare results of debates would give the Lower House no idea of the arguments that had moved the Bishops. Consequently the Metropolitan gives them a brief résumé of the discussions. But what individual could do that adequately in a few words and unrehearsed? Certainly if anyone could do it, the present Archbishop of Canterbury could, but he would be the first to acknowledge how easy it is to give a misleading impression.

The fact is that the procedure is medieval and out-moded. It may be good for the Commons to be summoned to the House of Lords to hear the Queen's speech. But they have the whole thing in print before they begin to make their own speeches on the address in reply. It seems that in Convocation we ought either to let the two Houses meet together (which is the expedient adopted at York) or abandon the effort to keep the two Houses in pace with each other. This would give each House the opportunity of seeing in print the arguments used by the other before it debated the same subject.

At this point, having given some idea of the clumsiness of the English machinery, I am tempted to sketch by way of contrast the condition of things overseas. Of course I can't do that for every country, although the Anglican organization outside these islands does tend to conform to one general pattern, but I can do it for Australia and especially for Queensland, which is the part I know best.

There the effective unit is the Diocesan Synod, which consists of three Houses with equal rights, the Diocesan Bishop sitting as a House to himself. Synod meets for the inside of one week each year, and is a tremendous social and public event beside which our frequent assemblies fade into insignificance. Synod has no measures to present to Parliament, but it passes canons regulating its own ecclesiastical affairs with all the care and with much the same procedure as are devoted to bills in Parliament. Each year Synod elects a Diocesan Council of clerical and lay representatives with the Bishop at its head to act "in the place of Synod when Synod is not sitting". In other words, the Diocesan Council becomes roughly speaking the governing body of the Diocese. It is "the Bishop in Council".

Once every three years Provincial Synod meets. This also occupies the inside of a week, but it does not arouse so much interest as the Diocesan Synod. For one thing it is much smaller, consisting only of representatives of each of the constituent Diocesan Synods. Then of

course it moves about, being held in the various see towns by turns; so it is nowhere an established local institution. Also the business with which it deals and the spheres in which it can override the Diocesan Synods are very circumscribed. In few provinces is it of great importance.

More interest is aroused by the General Synod, which meets once in five years. It is a big affair, since it is national, and includes representatives from the Diocesan Synods all over the country. It is also the great arena where major struggles take place between the theological schools of rival colours. The national press, or at any rate the press of the largest cities, recognizes its importance and is prepared to give a good deal of space to any of its discussions that make a good "story". That of course may frequently happen when Synod is dealing with some motion or report on a moral or social question of national significance.

Diocesan Synod once a year, Provincial Synod every three years, and General Synod every five—that is really all the time that the senior Australian clergyman has to spend on central legislative activities. If he is a member of the diocesan episcopate he is also expected to attend Bishops' Meetings once a year, but that is entirely up to him. The fact that Bishops so rarely miss is evidence of the value they find in such informal gatherings with colleagues who are engaged in the same pastoral and administrative activities. But even when all such occasions are counted in, the two or three times a year when an Australian Bishop may be obliged to give himself up to tending legislative machinery compare very favourably with the eight or nine times which may be demanded of his English counterpart.

At the present moment, although most people in this country seem to be agreed that the prevailing system is far from satisfactory, there are very few suggestions for lightening the burden. Some indeed would actually increase it. Thus it is suggested that in order to maintain the closest possible contact between the Diocesan and his clergy, the Bishop should (*a*) hold regular meetings of a sacred, that is purely clerical, synod and (*b*) form a Bishop's Council of some of his leading clergy to advise him on matters of common interest. The double suggestion is obviously attractive. A sacred synod might make for close co-operation between the Diocesan and his clergy and thus assist the maintenance of unity within the diocese. But it presupposes a quite small diocese with not too many clergy to make discussion possible. In my own experience such gatherings have been held only on very rare occasions and then the speech of the Bishop or of one of his visiting colleagues was the only business. There was no debate and indeed, owing to numbers, it would scarcely have been possible. When I held my episcopal visitation of the London Diocese I specifically asked whether the clergy would like me to call a sacred synod, and the quite overwhelming answer was "No". The clergy still remembered too well the fiasco that attended a well-meant attempt many years ago.

The idea of a Bishop's Council also begins to seem less attractive

when examined carefully. If its business is to advise the Bishop on matters of common interest, one might ask why the archdeacons and rural deans could not perform this service. If it is answered that they are officers appointed by the Bishop, and that what you want are representatives of the "unofficial" clergy, a way out of the difficulty might be to let the clergy appoint their own rural deans. An even better solution would be for the Bishop to go the round of the ruri-decanal chapters. That he probably ought to do in any case as part of his ordinary routine. It gives him a chance of much more intimate contact with his clergy than any of the other proposals and need not be reckoned as part of the legislative machinery at all.

Another type of suggestion deals with the conduct of business in Convocation. It is suggested that the two Houses of Canterbury might follow the example of York and have many more combined meetings. This would not only save time, it might also prevent the development of a breach between the two Houses. To keep the two in the same mind and the same spirit is never easy. During the Latitudinarian period there was a definite breach and there were considerable differences at the time of the Oxford Movement. It would be worth almost any effort to prevent the same thing happening again.

Yet there are very real difficulties, both practical and psychological. On the practical side the numbers in the case of Canterbury are much greater than at York: intimate discussion would be much more difficult, even supposing that a suitable room were available. On the psychological side each House would be inclined to stand on its dignity. The clergy quite naturally value the opportunity of sitting under their own chairman; the Bishops equally value the opportunity of talking things over among themselves. Nevertheless it is much to be hoped that in spite of the difficulties the two Houses will make some experiments in common debate.

A more drastic suggestion for saving time is that the Bishops should put an end to their informal gatherings at Lambeth. That would certainly relieve some of the pressure on our time, but it would be quite disastrous. There is a good deal of business, such as the selection and training of candidates for ordination, which is the special prerogative of the Bishops and which they simply must meet together to discuss. Moreover Convocation and Assembly alike, when giving the Bishops laws to administer, often leave the detailed interpretation to them. It is important that they should be free to form some gentleman's agreement on such interpretation. This has been done with special success in recent years.

The idea that the Bishops are at sixes and sevens with each other in the administration of their dioceses is one of the most amazing untruths ever circulated by unthinking persons. In any case it is the Bishops' Meeting that gives the opportunity for ironing out any differences that may arise. The unity maintained extends beyond the borders of England itself. Representatives of the Welsh and Scottish Bishops are always present at these meetings, and their attendance helps to ensure that the whole Anglican Communion in Great Britain shall act in concert and have "the same mind one towards

another". In thus preserving freedom of intercommunication between various parts of the Church the Bishops are fulfilling one of their most important and historic functions.

Perhaps most important of all the arguments in favour of these meetings is the fact that here the new Bishop gets an opportunity of learning his job. The thousand and one details that bother the newcomer can here be discussed with experienced colleagues. Here too may be distinguished those *nuances* of administrative policy which it may be impossible to reduce to writing, but the knowledge of which may make all the difference between success and failure in one's task.

It seems to me that in any attempt to reform our legislative assemblies three points must especially be borne in mind. The first is the obsolescence of Convocation, the second the diminished importance in England of the province as an ecclesiastical unit, and third the need to incorporate the laity fully into our governing body.

With regard to the first, no one with any sense of history would wish to see Convocation pass out of existence altogether. In any case it fulfils one useful function in giving the Archbishops an opportunity of making pronouncements *urbi et orbi*. Although it is easy to make cynical remarks about the urge for publicity, it is nevertheless most important that they should have a platform from which they can speak both to Church and Nation on moral and religious subjects. The more picturesque ceremonial of Convocation has an additional value which it would be a pity to lose. It ought to be possible to preserve both these values by uniting the Convocations and the Assembly in such a way that the meetings of the former could be held as an introduction to the latter. Convocation would thus remain as something more than a vermiform appendix in the body politic of the Church. What is really valuable about it would be retained, but the major part of its business could be merged in that of the Church Assembly in which all three houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity can sit together or separately as desired.

With regard to the second point, it is evident that for good or evil centralization has come to stay. The Enabling Act deliberately bypassed our provincial organization and set up one Assembly for the whole country. Our experience should have shown us that it is more efficient than two Convocations each trying to keep in step with the other. There is really little excuse for maintaniing four houses to do the business of one. Much better let the business be done in the Assembly. If on historical grounds, however, it seems a pity to merge the Canterbury and York Convocations together, each could have its separate meeting as a prelude to the Assembly, either in London or elsewhere.

It is the third point, the need to integrate the laity fully into the legislative machinery of the Church, which may prove to be the overriding consideration in the whole matter. What the commission which is now sitting on synodical government may have to say about it we do not know. But in the meantime we seem to have decided the fundamental principle, in our characteristic way, on a side-issue. By

committing the draft Canons at an early stage of their compilation to the House of Laity we have conceded the right of the laity to a voice in the discussion of *all* church business. Personally I was against this step, as I considered it contrary to our practice hitherto and without any warrant in such constitution as we have. I believed that in matters of such importance we should always go strictly "by the book". However, I have no prejudice against altering what I take to be the present balance of our constitution and admitting the laity as of right to a full voice even in matters of faith and worship. I have seen the system at work overseas and have lost any fear of it that I may once have had. By a "full voice" I mean such an equal right of debate and of veto as is already possessed by the House of Bishops and the House of Clergy. I should object strongly to the laity being given a preponderant voice in any such matters, but I believe the time has come to recognize their equality.

If the laity are to be given equal rights there seems no reason left why Convocation and Assembly should not be in some way assimilated. There seems nothing left for Convocation distinctively to do. It would surely then be possible to retain the more formal and picturesque elements of Convocation while merging its actual business with that of the Assembly. I do not profess to have any blue-print showing the precise way in which this could be done. There are many who, I feel sure, could provide such a detailed scheme without much difficulty. All I now contend is that if the principle were accepted and put into effect we should save time and money and make our legislative machinery much more efficient than it is at present.

WM: LONDIN:

"De-Mythologizing" the Gospel[1]

WHEN I first read H. W. Bartsch's symposium *Kerygma und Mythos,* I wrote to a friend: "Bultmann's essay is a confession that the problems with which liberal theology was concerned have not been satisfactorily settled. It is unlikely to cause any stir over here, for while Bultmann realizes the urgent need to set theology free from mythology our own 'Concordance theologians', the allegorists and typologists, are loading it with more, and thereby making it more incredible." My first impression is confirmed by reading the book in its English dress.[2]

Five years after its appearance, interest in Bultmann's essay seems to have been aroused by lectures broadcast in the B.B.C.'s Third Programme and by I. Henderson's *Myth in the New Testament,* published in 1952. I offer some reflections on Bultmann's essay, the importance of which I judge to be rather in the problem with which it deals and by the fact that it was raised by so eminent a New Testa-

[1] This article is an expansion of one section of a paper read to the Cambridge University Theological Society on 29 October 1953 before the book edited by H. W. Bartsch appeared in English.

[2] *Kerygma and Myth.* Translated by Reginald H. Fuller. S.P.C.K. 22s. 6d.

ment scholar than in anything positive in the preliminary solution he proposes. He is himself fully aware that a satisfactory answer will require the labours of a generation.

To *Kerygma and Myth* Dr Austin Farrer contributes "An English Appreciation". His own book, *A Study in St Mark*, as I think, contains much that, were it justified, would encourage scepticism rather than reasonable belief; but I agree with what I take to be his view of Bultmann's handling of "The Problem of Demythologizing of the New Testament Preaching" (to give a literal rendering of the subtitle of his *Neues Testament und Mythologie*) that it will satisfy only those who can accept the so-called Existential philosophy. It is just as much an interpretation of the gospel influenced by that form of thought as was liberalism by the dominant ideas of its period. There is, indeed, a difference. Liberalism at least endeavoured to set the gospel in a much wider field of fact and knowledge. Existentialism, as Dr Farrer truly remarks, sets up arbitrary limits to the scope of thought; as far as I can judge, it is an analytical and largely emotional, certainly subjective, interpretation of a rather peculiar human experience. I mean that much of it has never entered the consciousness of more than a tiny fraction of mankind, and certainly not into that vast number whose active lives are most beneficial to their fellows. Introspective existentialists, and others who over-emphasize the "hopeless" condition of man, one may perhaps regard as reflecting mainly their own.

Every even partially educated person at all interested in such matters knows that New Testament cosmology is mythical. Disregarding elaborations and refinements which make no significant difference, "myth" is properly descriptive of (*a*) attempts to account for facts and experiences when knowledge requisite for explanation is much less than that available to those who apply the term to earlier attempts to explain (the aeteological myth of Genesis 3 is a manifest example), and (*b*) the representation of truth, including any believed to be supernatural, such as can be best or only conveyed in symbols which derive from natural experience—i.e., "truth embodied in a tale", or in a parable, like Plato's myths. It is in this second sense that Bultmann uses the term, though it is applicable in both senses to some passages in the New Testament. Every culture has had its *mythische Weltbild* or mythical world-picture. Early Christians could only interpret their experiences in the one they had inherited, whether Jewish or Hellenic. The primitive Christian preaching or proclamation, kerygma, as we can recover it, was but a fragmentary outline. Even for Jews it would have required a good deal of interpretative or explanatory comment to make it an intelligible gospel, and very much more for Gentiles knowing little or nothing of the Old Testament. The inevitable results are clear enough in the New Testament and persisted until a much later time. Jewish Christians found it hard to transmute their inherited Judaism and so tended to obliterate the distinctive Christian message: Hellenic Christians tended to engulf the message in a riotous speculation, almost entirely lacking empirical or historical basis, which is sometimes called

philosophy but which was little more than free composition. The unity of the New Testament, nowadays heavily over-emphasized, owes much of its recognition to the fact that we read the New Testament in the light of later formulated doctrine; it is far less clear when the comprising documents are read as single and separate compositions. Whatever may be true of New Testament writers themselves, there was certainly no *theology* universally or generally accepted in the first-century Church; for nothing is more evident than that much of the New Testament was written not only to inform but to *correct* beliefs and practices which flourished in the Church but which were dangers to its life and message, and which remained or later became serious menaces.

Professor Bultmann finds the New Testament doctrine of salvation through Christ permeated by mythological Jewish Apocalyptic and Gnostic redemption-myths. He knows, none better, that this view represents no new discovery and admits that all he says could have been said forty years ago. It was. He states it in an extreme form and is emphatic that it would be "senseless and impossible" to expect modern man to accept such mythical views of the world, which must be accepted or rejected in their entirety. It is, he says, impossible to dissociate the Christian gospel from its *mythische Weltbild* and to present it in a form acceptable to modern experience, knowledge and thought, by stripping away the mythology, or by selecting some and subtracting other features of the kerygma. "Demythologizing" does not mean this procedure. The only hope is "to produce an existentialist interpretation of the dualistic mythology of the New Testament".

When Bultmann turns from emphasizing the need for his task to the outline performance of it, i.e. to the saving of the kerygma as authoritative proclamation, his position seems to me a strange and unjustified mixture of extreme "modernism" with "fundamentalism".[1] He is sufficiently Barthian to state, as though it were a self-evident or established principle, that "the criterion adopted must be taken not from modern thought but from the understanding of human existence which the New Testament itself enshrines". Why so? For if the Christian gospel or kerygma cannot be dissociated from the mythology which permeates its presentation, and if modern knowledge and thought can distinguish between fact and mythology and render the acceptance of mythology senseless and meaningless, on what ground can the kerygma be regarded as uncontaminated by mythology or withdrawn from the same judgment?

The essential of the kerygma Bultmann regards as *Ereignis*, an event, manifested in Jesus, who is *das entscheidene Heilsereignis*, the decisive Saving-event. But "the saving efficacy of the cross is not derived from the fact that it is the cross of Christ: it is the cross of

[1] I am not confident that I understand it fully. Not a little of it I can only regard as a discussion of the relations between abstract notions (for which he supplies no actual denotation and which I suspect to have none) and their application in an "existentialist" interpretation of man and his nature and needs.

Christ because it has this saving efficacy". (I do not understand a statement which seems to me merely playing with words.) Yet the meaning of the cross derives from the disciples' experience of the resurrection. This, however, is no historical[1] confirmation of the meaning of the cross because the resurrection is itself an object of faith; and one article of faith cannot be established by invoking another.[2] Bultmann writes that the cross "understood as the event of redemption . . . certainly has a mythical character as far as its objective setting is concerned". (One may wonder what other than an objective setting it had or could have.) Or consider the following quotations:

> "The Jesus who was crucified was the pre-existent, incarnate Son of God, and as such he was without sin. He is the victim whose blood atones for our sins. He bears vicariously the sin of the world, and by enduring the punishment for sin on our behalf he delivers us from death. This mythological interpretation is a hotch-potch of sacrificial and juridical analogies, which have ceased to be tenable for us to-day."

Yet a little later he can write in all seriousness:

> "When he suffered death, Jesus was already the Son of God, and his death *by itself* was the victory over the power of death." (Italics mine.) . . . "Cross and resurrection form a single cosmic event which brings judgment to the world and opens up for men the possibility of authentic life."

I have insufficient ingenuity to discern, if the first of these quotations is truth, how the second can have anything other than an unacceptable mythological meaning, or to perceive on what grounds it can be seriously stated.[3] Somehow faith in the resurrection (which, be it remembered, is not an event in any sense which criticism can establish or refute) generated faith in the crucifixion as a Salvation-event (*Heilsereignis*) for the original disciples. But *we* can reach such belief only because the crucifixion and resurrection are

[1] For Bultmann *historisch* means that which can be established by historical criticism; *geschichtlich* means a past happening which also has a vital existential reference to life in the present. I should add that one can have faith in a person, but "events" are not proper objects of faith at all.

[2] "For the resurrection . . . is the eschatological event." The answer to the riddle "When is a past event which is not a historical event nevertheless an event?" would appear to be "When it is labelled 'eschatological' ". It is past high time that "eschatology" should be again restricted to its grammatical meaning. To-day almost any contentless statement will pass if it is called "eschatological". Some modern theology falls into the old error of supposing that knowledge of God and of things divine is increased by inventing dialectic formulas about him and them. When a Barthian who accepts the negative Gospel criticism of Bultmann says that "the resurrection is to be understood neither as outward nor inward, neither mystically nor as a supernatural phenomenon, nor as historical", he is saying it is not to be understood at all and is uttering meaningless verbiage.

[3] Bultmann seems to delight in verbal paradoxes. No religious person can even desire the reduction of faith to a prudential acceptance of the demonstrable. But to write "It is precisely its immunity from proof which secures the Christian proclamation against the charge of being mythological", is to write nonsense. Immunity from proof can "secure" nothing whatever except immunity from proof.

preached as such. Christ, crucified and risen, meets us in the word of the preaching and nowhere else. This assertion is the essence of the demythologized kerygma. The truth of Christianity is essentially "existential" and can be apprehended only by personal experience. Attempts to investigate the historical origins of the preaching amount to trying to establish faith in the word of God by historical research. Faith in the word of preaching is sufficient: it is absolute.

This I regard as no solution but as simply a surrender of the historic Christian claim. There is no natural theology, next to no reliable history, only a message enshrined in a mythological world-picture from which it cannot be detached. The basis of the Christian gospel becomes purely pragmatic, an appeal to "religious experience" in a peculiarly vulnerable form; for the experience results from hearing and responding to a message the truth or reasonableness of which cannot be tested except by the experience thus produced.

There are, of course, experiences properly designated religious; and they are fairly uniform. Awe, veneration, worship, prayer, sacrifice, the sense of dependence, insignificance and guilt, instinctive obedience, need of purification, the sense of deliverance and joy—some combination of these is found in other living religions as in Christianity, and in cults which now possess only historical interest. Only dogmatism can dismiss these experiences and activities of human nature as universal illusion. They may be regarded as the result of the "projection" of subjective cravings and wishes; and that may be the *psychological* account of them. But is a further question (and one which psychology which knows its limits and minds its own business, and does not assume the disguise of science to masquerade as philosophy or theology, will not attempt to answer) whether the "projection" is directed towards nothing or towards an invisible reality which calls it forth. These experiences and activities arise naturally from man's nature and are not artificially grafted on to it; and nature knows of few or no instincts pointing aimlessly. There is sufficient ground for the oft-quoted judgment of Mr F. H. Bradley that "the man who demands a reality more solid than that of the religious consciousness seeks he does not know what".

So much personal religious experience may legitimately claim. But it does not follow that religious experiences and activities, even if they point to some reality as their Object, thereby entitle us to bestow a character and attributes upon that Object, or to claim truth for a message proclaimed as Its word, without reference to other knowledge about the world and man, still less to ascribe to It a nature and attributes inconsistent with such other knowledge. Religion has found expression in the most variegated and often grotesque mythologies and theologies. There may be other and more features of the universe which do not confirm the view of its nature or the kind of explanation of it which man's religious life indicates. Hence it is only by reference to a wider range of experience and knowledge than purely religious experiences and values that reasonable men can find *grounds* (as distinct from *causes*) for religious

beliefs which can claim truth. Bultmann's position assumes that the reasons why the Christian proclamation comes to be believed are *necessarily* the reasons why it is true, i.e. if he is concerned with its truth at all. For myself, I would rather have a reasonable probability as a basis for faith than a certitude *induced by faith,* itself evoked by hearing and responding to a message lacking all other grounds for belief in it.

Christian theologians should face the fact that radically negative or sceptical conclusions about the historical origins of Christianity involve the end of *historic* Christianity. Bultmann is grievously wrong in supposing that it is belief in the resurrection which gives soteriological meaning to the crucifixion: the resurrection is but one essential belief necessary to that interpretation of the cross. There must also be belief in God, and even so the soteriological meaning of the cross can derive only from a particular answer to the question "What think ye of Christ?" The "events" of the cross and the resurrection, however characterized, must be interpreted in the light of belief about Christ to acquire any saving value. Not, of course, that historical criticism can ever *prove* the truth of Christian faith or render faith superfluous; but there is a world of difference between a faith with reasonable grounds and a faith arising from hearing and responding to a message in no degree verifiable except in the response which itself demands faith in the message.

If I did not (upon grounds which, though far from being coercive, I judge to afford a basis for reasonable faith) believe in God, taken with what that belief implies about the values in his creation and of what happens within it, our Lord's disciples' belief in his resurrection would weigh very little with me. I should notice some apparently legendary elements in the Gospels' reports of it; but I should not trouble to explain away the fact. I should say that, at most, all that is *proved* is that one who was dead thereafter appeared, intermittingly and for a brief period and in a form which cannot be precisely determined, to certain persons who had known him in life. I should regard that as inexplicable; but in a Godless universe a few more inexplicable and meaningless marvels would be no more a difficulty than a basis for faith: I should almost expect them.

There is much in the New Testament which, if it commends itself to reason and conscience in the light of belief in God, is true *however* it came to be written there. But I cannot think this is so of what is the most distinctive Christian doctrine. There is one thing which, as I judge, no one can affirm unless he has succumbed to prolonged indoctrination by a perverted sophistication: it is to proclaim in one breath that the divine was incarnate in one historical person, in such wise as may be affirmed of no other, while in the next breath confessing that, as a historical person, very little is reliably known about him because we have only what the myth-dominated minds of those who knew him somehow came to make of him. It also seems to me incredible that first-century Jewish Christians, or St Paul, or any normal person in any century, could preach a message about one man that there was no other name under heaven in which salvation could

be found, and at the same time care little or nothing what manner of man he was and what he did and taught. And if the first disciples and St Paul were capable of such a feat of credulity and incapable of transmitting any trustworthy information about him except that he was crucified and that they afterwards saw him alive, I can see no reason why anyone in his senses should pay any attention to their theological opinions, unless he is interested in the curiosities of human ideas.

Bultmann's conclusions about Christian origins are the outcome of his studies in Form-criticism. Much of that has little to do with historical criticism and it is every whit as much determined by dogmatic presuppositions, if not more so, as were the eliminations from the Gospels proposed by those of whom Harnack is the typical representative; and I should argue that, of the two, the liberal presuppositions were the less frailly based. The alleged indifference of St Paul to any historical basis for his gospel is generally exaggerated, and made plausible by completely ignoring both the content and the spirit of his ethical ideal, in which there is neither fumbling nor development, and which is not Greek, Stoic or (in its most determinative principle) Hebraic; while in the Gospels there is much which bears no trace of having been influenced, still less produced, by either Jewish apocalyptic mythology or Gnostic redemption-myths, but which (if early Christians were so mythically dominated) seems to have survived in spite of the mythology.

Historical scepticism about Christian origins does not, of course, prove the Incarnation-doctrine untrue: it simply means that there are no longer adequate grounds for affirming it, and therefore, as a serious question of religious belief, it no longer arises. It is sufficient ground for not believing anything if there is no adequate reason why one should believe it. Whether the central Christian doctrine of the significance of Christ lies on the surface of the historical facts is a secondary question: what is of fundamental importance is the reliability of a sufficient amount of what is related as fact, which the most able of the Synoptic evangelists asserts in the most formal language that it was his purpose to record, as all of them purport to do. The recurring desire to find a basis for Christian doctrine free from the contingencies of the historical is prompted by the difficulties and perplexities of the historical question; but it is a dangerous snare, and to succumb to it will in the end prove fatal to the central Christian doctrine. It is a modern form of the ancient demand, "Up, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, we know not what has become of him." To yield to it will be, sooner or later, to earn the Psalmist's rebuke of Aaron's attempt: "Thus they turned their glory into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay." Bultmann is right in perceiving so clearly that a religious *doctrine* cannot but reflect the general world of ideas of those who accept and fashion it. Their world-picture may lead them not to recognize that ideas can get transformed into reports of factual happenings; but that does not mean they are unable to distinguish between facts and fictions when they are in a position to see, to hear, and to report. It is impossible

to avoid the question, Is the report generally reliable? or the consequences of a negative answer. Of *the* Incarnation, theological inquiry must ask, Are there sufficient grounds (which from the nature of the affirmation must include historical grounds) for faith's committal to belief in it? Experience can be as misleading as ideas, particularly if the experience be induced by the ideas. Whatever our present-day experience in responding to the Christian proclamation, we can reasonably associate it with a risen and living Christ only if there are sufficient reasons for believing that the idea of a risen and living Christ differs from erroneous ideas in having a factual counterpart. If all the constituents of his problem are what Bultmann says they are there would seem to be no possible solution.

J. S. Bezzant.

Two Ways to God—or One?

A Study of the Way of Affirmation with reference to the works of Charles Williams

To go to Hell is comparatively easy. "Facilis descensus Averno", wrote Virgil. And not many years later One greater than Virgil said, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many be they that enter in thereby. But how narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto Life!"

What, then, of this more difficult task: this straitened way into the heavenly places? For the Christian the first and last word is that spoken by Christ, "No one cometh unto the Father but by me." Once that is accepted, he finds himself provided with all that is needful for the journey: the communion of saints for company; private and common prayer as the two sandals for his feet; sacramental food to give him strength; Holy Scripture for a sword at his side. But the way is difficult.

One of the problems with which the pilgrim is faced is concerned with his relationship to the world through which he journeys. What should be his relationship to the material things around him? and to the other human beings with whom he has to do? A relationship of Love, certainly; but if St Thomas Aquinas spoke truly when he said, "Man's heart adheres the more intensely unto one thing by how much the more it is withdrawn from all others", then to obey the first commandment and love God with all one's heart and soul and strength, a certain withdrawal or detachment from anything that is not God must be a fundamental necessity for the spiritual life. St Ignatius Loyola makes such a withdrawal the foundation of his *Spiritual Exercises*: He says

> Man was created to praise, do reverence to and serve God our Lord. . . . Hence it follows that man should make use of creatures so far as they do help him towards his end and should *withdraw* from them so far as they are a hindrance to him in regard of that end. Wherefore it is necessary to make ourselves detached in regard of all created things.

That sounds sane and balanced enough. Make use of God's creation so far as it helps; withdraw in so far as it is a hindrance. But in the writings of the spiritual masters most of the emphasis seems to have been put upon the withdrawal from, and indeed the renunciation of, the world. "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath cannot be my disciple", records St Luke. This is the way most familiar in the annals of sanctity. It is the Via Negativa, the ascetic way, whereby the soul casts aside all that is not God, the world and all that is in it which makes itself known to our senses, and passes through the Dark Night described by St John of the Cross. And it is for the Christian *in* the world—the professional man or the factory-hand—as much as for the monk or nun. I quote from the *Spiritual Instruction* of Blosius:

> The spiritual man, he says, must learn to leave himself and all other things for the love of God. . . . He must remember that not only bad things, but even those that are good, may become hindrances if they are loved or sought inordinately. . . . He must not look at, hear, smell, taste, say or touch anything merely for the pleasure of doing so; he must not desire to see, hear, smell, taste, speak or touch more or otherwise than God interiorly permits. For if he seeks delight in creatures he will not be able to find true delight in God.

Such is the Way of Negation.

But there is, we are told, another way: the Way of Affirmation. This is the approach to God *through* the very Images which the other rejects. The pilgrim who travels along this way regards every appearance of finite beauty as a revelation of infinite Beauty, and he *accepts* it in the faith that it will lead him ultimately to God. The doctrine of Affirmation is to be found in several passages of the Old Testament: in the creation stories of Genesis; in those Psalms which assert that "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handywork"; in Isaiah's vision when the Seraphim were heard to chant "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his Glory."

The seeds of this doctrine—of the approach to God through his creatures—are also to be found in Plato. It is true that in his writings we find the Buddhistic conception of the body as the prison house of the soul, from which the soul yearns to escape; but Plato was a Greek, and to the Greeks the splendour of creation had been revealed. We find him therefore beginning to affirm something of the glory of the human body. For him earthly beauty is a "copy" of the original Beauty that man has seen in the heavenly places. Here is a passage from the *Phaedrus*:

> Whenever one who is fresh from those mysteries, who saw much of that heavenly vision, beholds in any god-like face or form a successful copy of original Beauty, he first of all feels a shuddering chill . . . then, as he continues to gaze, he is inspired with a reverential awe, and did he not fear the repute of exceeding madness, he would offer sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god.

This acceptance of the created world as a revelation of, and a way to, the Heavenly Beauty is the way followed by Virgil and Dante,

Wordsworth and Keats. For Virgil the City of Rome was an image of the Ideal City; Dante's vision came to him through his love of Beatrice; Keats perceived the beauty of eternity in a finite urn; Wordsworth in the beauty of Nature.

The artist in form and colour, no less than the poet in words, may also express his sense of the heavens and the earth, the holy flesh and all material creation, declaring the glory of God. Piero della Francesca is a lovely example. Mrs Ridler refers to this quality of his painting in her poem *The Golden Bird*:

> Look, said the Fox, look inwardly
> For here the flesh is not
> Despised, is not diseased:
> As here the form is known through colour
> So is the spirit through flesh,
> Not only look but gaze
> And gazing grow to what you see, seeing possess it.

Turning from poetry and painting to prose, how strikingly is the same idea expressed in the works of Thomas Traherne! "I was entertained", he writes, in *A Child's Vision of the World*,

> like an Angel with the Works of God in their splendour and glory. I saw all in the peace of Eden: Heaven and Earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam than to me. All Time was Eternity and a perpetual Sabbath. . . . The stones of the street were as precious as gold . . . the green trees transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die; but all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and *something Infinite behind everything appeared*: which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The City seemed to stand in Eden and to be built in Heaven.

Art; Nature; the human form; the City; all creatures great and small—all these, if "feelingly watched" as Wordsworth put it, or—to use a phrase of Charles Williams (to whose works I shall refer in a moment)—if we have "a mind to examine the pattern of the glory", all these can lead us to the heavenly places. Charles Williams would see something of the pattern in the control of traffic by a policeman "helmed in a white cloak, stretching out one sceptred arm" (I quote from his novel *The Greater Trumps*)—

> as if Charlemagne or one like him stretched out his controlling sword over the tribes of Europe pouring from the forests . . . the noise of all the pausing street came . . . as the roar of many peoples; the white cloak held them by a gesture: order and law were there.

Order and Law: manifestations, in their degree, of the operation of the Holy Ghost. And if in a policeman, how much more in the authority behind the policeman: the monarch of England (inasmuch as the monarch is also a man, or woman, under authority)? On the day of the funeral of King George VI these words appeared in a leading article of *The Times* newspaper:

> It may be that modern theologians, rightly alert against the danger of allowing secular emotion to pass for religious belief, have lost their sense of the value of temporal loyalty as *one approach to the understanding of religious truth*. In this way, and always in the zealous practice of their faith, the Kings and Queens of England still play an indispensable part in the nation's spiritual life.

Poetry; pictures; Plato; the Old Testament; Traherne; *The Times* newspaper: this is all very well, but has the Way of Affirmation any sanction from the highest authorities of the spiritual life? Dante, with all his passion for Beatrice, was, after all, married to another lady; and Traherne, though a godly parson, was no great star in the constellation of the saints. What support for this doctrine can be found in the teaching of the New Testament?

Above all, surely, this: THE WORD BECAME FLESH. This, the Incarnation, is central to the Christian Faith. And the Resurrection and Ascension of the Flesh of the Son of God, and his exaltation in the heavenly places, all witness to the absolute worth of the Body. The outward and visible sign of the Glory of God given us in Jesus of Nazareth (of which the Fourth Gospel speaks so explicitly) and the sacrament of the Body of Christ which is the Church, direct the mind of the Christian outwards to the world around him so that he may perceive the sacramental principle at work in all God's creation.

Some theologians indeed have been driven to deny the validity of "natural theology", but surely St Paul was near to the mind of Christ when he wrote in his letter to the Romans:

> Since the beginning of the world, the invisible attributes of God, his eternal Power and divine Being, have been plainly discernible through the things which he has made.

Yes; you may say, but in the same letter he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Indeed the glory of the human body is spoiled by sin, and our spiritual life is a struggle for the liberation of the body as well as the soul. But there is no opposition of body and soul. Spiritual man is not a creature *without* flesh and blood, but an incarnate spirit. The body is not a mere instrument but the expression of the divine-human being of man.

The Way of Affirmation therefore (the approach to God *through* the Images of this world, regarding earthly beauty as a revelation of the divine Beauty, accepting it as a signpost to God) is fundamentally a Christian Way of life, no less a way to God than the Way of Negation.

In some sense, perhaps, every soul must follow both ways. The Son of Man had nowhere to lay his head, yet he was also charged with being a gluttonous man and a winebibber. And St Paul in his letter to the Philippians wrote:

> I know how to be abased and I know also how to abound; in everything have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want.

The monk and the nun must honour the holy wedlock by which they were born into the world even though they reject marriage for

themselves. And those who travel the road of Affirmation must remember that the outward sign which points them to God is not itself God and must be ultimately rejected. We have to hold in tension some words originating, I believe, from St Augustine, words familiar to all who have read Charles Williams' novel *War in Heaven*: THIS ALSO IS THOU; NEITHER IS THIS THOU. Every created thing, if we "watch it feelingly" and " examine the pattern of the glory", can lead us to God, for it is an image of God—THIS ALSO IS THOU. Yet, at the same time, NEITHER IS THIS THOU. However holy it may be, if loved and sought inordinately, for its own sake, and isolated from its source, "it becomes" (to quote Dr Lewis's phrase in *Arthurian Torso*, his commentary on the poems of Charles Williams) "an idol whose service is damnation".

This leads me to think that the Way of Affirmation cannot rightly be called *another* way to God. The difference between the ascetic way and the Way of Affirmation would seem to be one of degree rather than one of kind. Before Affirmation can be made there must be a disciplined detachment, a dying in order to live. And on the other hand, those who follow the Way of Negation, the Religious Orders (and the enclosed orders in particular), though they are called to a far greater degree of detachment, are not called to a life that condemns that which is given up. This, as we have seen, would be a blasphemy against the Incarnation. St John of the Cross is perhaps the greatest exponent of the ascetic way, but, as Maritain writes in his book *The Degrees of Knowledge*, "he preaches neither mutilation nor suicide, nor the slightest ontological destruction of the most fragmentary filament of the wing of the smallest gnat". What he does demand is "the death which is called the expropriation of the self. It is a death which transforms us into love". For this quotation I am indebted to a member of an enclosed order, and she continues in her letter to me as follows:

> Of course God leads no two souls in the same way, and it may well be that for some there has to be a period in which detachment may seem like rejection, but in reality it is only the rejection of the lesser good in order to reach the greater, God himself. But again and again one finds that when the years of discipline have done their work, all that was given up is given back. The saints are more loving because they have learnt to love God supremely, and so to find him in everything and not least in his material creation. In a lesser degree it is one's own experience too: I think all of us here [in the convent] would say that our love for those in the world is stronger, not weaker, and at the moment we are far from being indifferent to or rejecting the wonder and beauty of an English spring.

Certainly it is the vocation of some to "make themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake", but where asceticism has condemned the body and rejected the world there precisely it ceases to be Christian and takes unto itself other, largely neo-platonic, elements. Every Christian must undertake the discipline of *detachment*—for, as Blosius said, "not only bad things but even those that are good may become hindrances if they are loved or sought inordinately"—but no Christian must deny the world. Rather he affirms its supreme relatedness to God.

However, if the ascetic Way and the Way of Affirmation are not different in kind but only in degree, there is certainly a considerable difference in degree; and although every soul must in some sense follow both ways yet we are called, none the less, to travel principally the one way or the other. "Which way is better?" asks Celia Coplestone in Mr Eliot's play *The Cocktail Party*. "Neither way is better", answers Dr Reilly. "Both ways are necessary. It is also necessary to choose between them."

It would seem that Mr Eliot himself has chosen the Way of Negation, if one may judge from the substance and the music of much of his poetry. It is the way which, in his play *The Cocktail Party*, Celia Coplestone herself chooses. Edward and Lavinia follow the Way of Affirmation; and something of its implications is illustrated in the action of the last scene of the play. But for a full description we look to Mr Eliot, I think, in vain. That offered in the second Act is most disappointing. For a fuller understanding of the Way of Affirmation we must turn to the writings of Charles Williams.

Charles Williams died in May 1945, in his 59th year. His work as a creative writer was accomplished as an *addition* to a full-time job. He wrote more than forty books: poetry, fiction, theology, plays, literary criticism and historical biography. We must turn to him in our present study because he is, I think, almost the only modern writer who definitely places himself in the non-ascetic tradition which rejoices in the created world, the tradition that descends from Virgil—Dante—Wordsworth. (Those who have read Miss Dorothy Sayers' translation of Dante's *Inferno* will remember that it is dedicated to Charles Williams—"The Dead Master of the Affirmations".) He possessed an extraordinary power of perceiving the significance and value of those moments of exalted imagination which come probably to most of us from time to time, but the meaning of which, and the transcendental truth which they reveal, most of us fail to appreciate.

Sometimes, when we contemplate the choice of a fiancé made by a friend of ours, we may wonder what on earth she could have seen in him to make her fall "in love". What on earth? There lies the solution, for it is nothing on earth. It is hid from *our* eyes; but our friend, in certain exalted moments, beholds her lover clothed in a glory emanating not from him but from the heavenly places. It is the experience described in the passage I quoted from Plato, an experience which Williams believed could be, if one has "a mind to examine the pattern of the glory", the first stage on the Way of Affirmation by which the individual soul may seek and find that Goal which has been ordained for it—the Vision of God.

Williams' thought found its fullest expression in poetic form, and the quintessence of his work is to be found in his two books of poems *Taliessin through Logres* and *The Region of the Summer Stars*. But his poems are difficult, and to quote snippets from them would be to do the poet an injustice. The reader must submit himself to a period of initiation into the understanding of Williams' imagery and ideas. There is no short cut. But he may rest assured

that, after the night of searching, great joy cometh in the morning. He will receive an insight into the glory of the human body such as he has never had before, and a great deal else besides.

A systematic statement of Williams' doctrine of Love will be found in his book *The Figure of Beatrice* and in Chapter V of *He Came Down from Heaven* (a chapter entitled "The Theology of Romantic Love"). But here I must be content merely to quote a descriptive passage from one of his novels, *Shadows of Ecstasy*, in which we are told how one of the characters sees the vision of glory when contemplating the arm of his betrothed:

> when she leant forward . . . somehow that arm always made him think of the Downs against the sky. There was a line, a curved beauty, a thing that spoke to both mind and heart; a thing that was there for ever. . . . He cried out that she was perfect, she was more than perfect; the movement of her arm was something tremendously important, and now it was gone. He had seen the verge of a great conclusion of mortal things, and then it had vanished. Over that white curve he had looked into incredible space; an abyss of intelligence lay beyond it.

Thus, for Charles Williams the proper interpretation of romantic love is theological. And the same applies whether the object of our love is the beauty of another person, or the beauty of the natural world, or forms of artistic creation, or the vision of true community life which Williams expressed by the image of the City. All who are "in Love" behold the object of their love clothed in a heavenly glory. It is no illusion; at such moments we are given to perceive a divine, transcendental reality. Each sees his own Beatrice as she eternally is. We are confronted by a sign of profound theological significance—if only we have eyes to see and a will to follow where we are being led.

The Way to God, then, through the narrow gate and the straitened path, can be either along the way of withdrawal from (but not rejection of) all that is not God, or along the Way of Affirmation, the acceptance of the Images of this earth as a ladder by which we may ascend to Heaven. The Way may lie through vows of chastity and poverty, or it may lie through home-life and the marriage-bond. It may lie through wine and music and poetry or through the white-washed cell of the convent. Either way a way to God—"either" (to quote, finally, from one of Charles Williams' poems)—

> either no less than the other the doctrine of largesse.

The two ways are very different in degree, but not in kind, for both demand detachment and discipline, awareness and attention, lowliness and love.

HUGH BLENKIN.

A Letter of James Hurdis to William Cowper

IN 1951 a letter written by Hurdis was found in the Prebendal School, Chichester, in the music room, where it was lying on a bookshelf. The only explanation we can give of its being there is that it had been concealed in an organ recently acquired by the school,

which had been overhauled a few months before. This organ, said to have been built by Hurdis and kept in his rooms at Magdalen College, Oxford, had been handed down in the family and its owner offered it to the school where his ancestor had been educated.

James Hurdis (1763 to 1801) was a Demy of Magdalen College, B.A. 1785, and Professor of Poetry in Oxford University in 1794. For six years he was Curate of Burwash, in Sussex. His early poems led to a friendship with William Cowper and William Hayley. He married after the date of this letter and left two sons and a posthumous daughter.

The letter is addressed to "William Cowper Esq, Weston-Underwood, Olney, Bucks". A later hand has added two notes in the margin. One to Curtis's Flora: "This book has since been sold by my cousin Elizabeth Sarah Hurdis after the death of her Father's sister. She never offered it to me but sent it to a dealer and I never knew the book was gone till after her death. The rationing required by the war upset her mind and she always thought she should be starved, wouldn't buy food enough" (evidently she is the Sally of the letter). The other note is to "her Painter"—"the Painter's name was Yeed of London".

W. K. Lowther Clarke.

Sunday Eve. March 18th 92.
Burwash.

Dear Sir,

Your last letter was put into my hands this morning as I came from Church. I should not have answered it so speedily, but that I purpose to be in Town tomorrow. A pressing invitation to Abingdon Street, three times repeated in the same letter, is the occasion of my so hastily quitting my desk, to which I thought I had securely nailed myself at least till the second week in April. I shall bring to London with me and dispatch from thence to you five sheets of my remarks upon the Iliad, which, if I have time while in town I will look over and correct. At present I know only that they exist, upon the testimony of your transcribers, and that they are somewhere deposited in my trunk, which is already afloat in its way to the metropolis.

I am much pleased with your little gratuitous Epitaph, and make no doubt but Sally will be highly gratified at this good-humoured tribute of your Muse. She, and not Jane, sat for the picture of Cecilia, and I flatter myself that my pencil never produced a likeness more just. That I have secretly copied her features she is not aware nor am I desirous that she should ever know it. Her modesty is one of the sweetest graces she has, and I should never excuse myself for extinguishing a single ray of it. In addition to the little information concerning her which you may collect from Sir Thomas, I must acquaint you that she is a most assiduous botanist. I take in Curtis's Flora Londinensis purposely for her improvement, and not long since she told me in a tone of great exultation, that of 138 plants of which plates have been already received, she was perfectly well acquainted with 123. Her sisters sometimes join her in her rambles. A short time since I carried a letter from Eliza to her, relative to this

her favourite pursuit. It was accidentally put into my pocket without a seal, and finding it open I thought it no burglary to peep. I was much surprized at reading in it the following beautiful passage, in which I assure you the only alteration I have made was to insert a second f in daffodil, which was spelt at first with but one.

"My dear Sally,

I suppose this frost has enabled you and Jane to prosecute with rigour your *botanical researches*. I mean to join the same pursuit as soon as the weather will permit; for what can be more pleasure either to the eye or mind, than the contemplation of those many beauties which compose the universal carpet beneath our feet. How impatiently do I await the return of Spring—the unfolding of the primrose and daffodil. The first that enchants my eye shall be honoured by a speedy transplantation into my bosom, where if love will succour it, it shall *never* die."

You may imagine I was not a little gratified, and you will not be surprized that I should resolve to peep again the first opportunity. To the lady who thus pleased me, I have lately given, in return for many services, a miniature picture of myself, which is to return with me to town, at the request of her Painter, to be exhibited at Somerset-house. It was ordered without her knowledge, and presented to her with the following lines engraved on the back of it

Go, little image, copied to be lov'd.
About Eliza's neck thy ribband twine
And ever welcome, ever unreprov'd,
Dwell in her bosom as she dwells in mine.
J. H. 1792.

I hope you will excuse the blots and inaccuracies, as my attention has been nearly exhausted by the duties of the day. It has been also sometimes diverted from my paper by my companions, one of whom has been *playing* and the other singing the airs in Handel's Messiah, ever since I began to write. Had I been used to write within a few feet of an Organ, it would not perhaps have impeded me had the Thunderer himself been there.

Yours affectionately
J. Hurdis.

N.B. I have not yet acknowledged yours of Dec^{r} 10. The agreeable call, which I gave you reason to anticipate on my behalf, will probably be into the diocese of Salisbury. The Bishop is much my friend. When I wished him joy of his promotion, he concluded the answer which he returned to my congratulations, with wishing me success in my profession, and assuring me that, when free from some engagements then upon his hands, he should be happy to contribute towards it. I have seen him since and believe him to be very sincere. You are perhaps no stranger to him, as the champion of Milton against Lauder. If you are, you will find a minute account of the whole proceeding in that Olla Podrida of information *Hawkins's Life of Johnson.*

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The Rev. J. S. Bezzant is Dean and Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, and Lecturer in Divinity in the University.

The Rev. Hugh Blenkin is Chaplain and Lecturer in Divinity at Hockerill Training College, Bishop's Stortford.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE CURE OF SOULS

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

In the office used in this diocese for the institution of a clerk to a benefice, the following words are directed to be used by the bishop: *accipe meam curam et tuam.* A footnote translates this "receive the cure of souls which is both mine and thine". I have been unable to discover how ancient this formula is (I understand that in medieval times a great variety of methods of institution is assumed to have existed), but presuming that it is an ancient formula I would like to ask whether those more learned than I in the Latin tongue would not agree that it is very badly mistranslated, and in such a way as to alter theologically the relationship between bishop, parish priest, and people. The order of words in a Latin sentence is never fortuitous, and the strange position of *meam* leads me to construe this sentence "receive the cure of souls which is mine, and is now delegated to you". It is the bishop who is the father-in-God to the people: he delegates his cure to the inferior clergy. Can any of your readers comment authoritatively on this point? I do not think it unimportant, especially when a bishop prefers to use the English translation instead of the Latin formula: if the translation is wrong, then it is very misleading, since it implies that the cure is shared, not delegated.

Yours faithfully,

(Rev.) ALAN D. ROGERS.

17 MUSEUM STREET,
SAFFRON WALDEN.

RECRUITMENT FOR THE MINISTRY

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

Much has been heard in recent years about the shortage of clergy and of men offering themselves for ordination, and the Church Assembly has just published a Report on this subject called "Supply of Fit Persons" (C.A. 1101), under the auspices of the Bishop of Bath and Wells and the Bishop of Southwell. The Report has recently been debated in the Church Assembly, but mainly by people who are concerned with the problem from the point of view of the

dioceses and the parishes. May one who has been thinking about this problem a good deal from a rather different point of view offer a few comments?

It seems to me that the Report is based upon a number of assumptions which are all more or less false. Let us look at them.

(1) *That "a diminishing ministerial force must mean a diminishing Church membership, and, as a result, an inevitable decline in the influence of the Church in national life"* (p. 3). It is easy for bishops who have to supply curates to overworked incumbents, and for parish priests looking for assistance in their work, to think in this way. But is it the right way? It is easy to think that the vitality of a Church (or should we say "its influence in national life"?) may be measured by the number of people in the pews on Sunday. But is that so? What we need so desperately to-day is Faith, and the thing which is going to help people most to find Faith is a good supply of Christians who can show them what Faith means. Not all these Christians need be priests—indeed, many of the best evangelists are, and probably always have been, laity. The way, therefore, to increase what the writers call "Church membership" is not to appoint more committees and recruiting-officers, but to make the whole Church more Christian, to produce men and women whose lives are witnesses to their faith in Christ. This is what the Church is failing to do. Let us try to talk a little less about numbers (whether of clergy or laity) and talk more about the things that Christ talked about—Faith, Sincerity, Repentance, Prayer. If we can produce a clergy who will really care about these things, and who can inspire their lay people to care about them too, we shall not have to worry so much about numbers.

(2) *That the shortage of clergy "is not necessarily a sign of weakness or discreditable to the Church"* (p. 3). But of course it is. The Church's position and influence to-day are much less than they were in 1900. Everyone knows that; and it is pretty generally known why this is so. The Church to-day (Anglican, Roman or Nonconformist) is terribly weak, and all the facile optimism which is sometimes heard is merely a refusal to face the facts. The ministry is also weak; not so much because of shortage of numbers, but because the clergy either fritter away their time or are enticed away from their true work, which is the preaching of the Gospel, the Administration of the Sacraments, and the building up of the Body of Christ. If the priesthood were associated in the minds of young men with something which is obviously supremely important and gloriously rewarding they would consider it a privilege to be allowed to take part in it. But too often the picture which they have in their minds is either of a life which is very grim ("the clergy are a fine body of men struggling against overwhelming odds", "hard work for very little pay", and all that sort of thing), or which is made to look very jolly ("a grand life", "a grand lot of chaps", etc.). The weakness of the Church lies in having failed to show this generation what the real work and nature of a priest is.

(3) *That the quality of candidates for the ministry can be tested by the standards which may be applied to other professions.* Through-

out this report there is the underlying assumption that "quality" means "a good educational background", which, in its turn, means being the son of parents able to provide such a background. This is, of course, a very Victorian point of view. Until the nineteenth century the majority of clergy in England (as also in the rest of Christendom) were of what would now be called "working-class" stock. But the growth of industry created a new middle class, and it was from this that most of the Victorian clergy were drawn. They had mostly had Public School education, were graduates of one of the ancient universities, and might be described as "English Gentlemen in Holy Orders". According to the standards then demanded, they were a good lot of men; but it is sobering to remember that these were the men who were in office when the Church in England most lamentably failed (1914–1918). This phenomenon of a "middle-class" clergy is now working itself out, and we are gradually getting back to where we were before. Of course we must have some well-educated priests "with I.Q.'s of 125" (p. 4), but the man of less education who loves God and can teach other people to love God is equally valuable to Christ and to his Church. We must believe this and say it loudly and clearly; but no one who really believed it could have written this Report.

(4) *That what is now required is a little more effort.* The Report is full of this. Activity is the quality which is going to win the day. There must be conferences for headmasters; conferences for schoolboys; conferences for clergy and teachers; conferences of all sorts and kinds. There must be co-operation with the Free Church Federal Council for the area; there must be suitable literature; above all, there must be in every diocese a "recruiting officer". Activity—diocesan and parochial Activity—that is is what is needed, for (p. 9) on this "everything in the end depends".

But does it? Surely what is required is not more activity and organization, but better teaching on the nature and function of the Church. What we need is not sermons on the Shortage of Clergy (even with distribution of suitable literature afterwards); nor appeals to well-educated young men to come forward; nor conferences, nor recruiting-officers; but teaching on the Church and the Ministry in relation to God's will for mankind. This must start in the kindergarten and go right through. It is really no good talking of the priesthood as a "career" and suggesting that in this "managerial society" (whatever that means) the Church should join with other professions in "chasing" (p. 3) the few available men. God does not work in that way. But let us show our people, young and old alike, men and women, boys and girls, what God's purpose for the world is, and how that purpose is to be fulfilled both by the priesthood and by the laity, and we shall then begin to see the whole thing in proportion. Until we do that, no amount of planning and activity is going to get us very far.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN R. H. MOORMAN.

CHICHESTER THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE GOSPEL BEFORE MARK. By Pierson Parker. Cambridge University Press (for University of Chicago Press). 49s.

Professor Pierson Parker, the Glorvina Rossell Hoffmann Professor of New Testament Literature at the General Theological Seminary, New York, has made an illuminating study of the pre-Markan tradition in this book, which is in the best traditions of Synoptic research. His work, which is mainly linguistic, reflects exact scholarship, is presented in great detail, and cannot be neglected by those who are interested in Synoptic criticism, and especially in the conditions which obtained during the pre-Gospel period.

Professor Parker first carefully examines the material in Matthew, consisting mainly of teaching, which has no parallel in any other Gospel, and for which he uses the symbol M. To Streeter's M hypothesis he raises the objection of its amorphous, atomistic character. M was not a book nor did it consist of selections from a book; it is not editorial material added by the Evangelist nor was it derived from the same document as Q. It never existed by itself in any form, being, in fact, those parts of an original Jewish Christian Gospel, K, which Mark omitted. Professor Parker maintains that this Jewish Christian Gospel, written perhaps in Aramaic, recorded sayings of Jesus which, taken out of their context, were used by Jewish Christians against their gentile opponents. "It came into the hands of John Mark, a protagonist for the gentile side of the controversy, at a time when that controvresy was at white heat" (p. 5). Mark excised from K the anti-gentile portions (M) and revised the rest. Years later, when the controversy had subsided, the compiler of Matthew combined K with the pro-gentile Q. "Thus canonical Matthew is drawn not from our present Gospel of Mark but from Mark's immediate ancestor. Luke, however, used canonical Mark and did not use its Jewish Christian progenitor" (ibid.).

The fascination and the importance of this hypothesis are manifest. Professor Parker bases it on evidence from language and style, from structure, and from content. He compares the language of M and Q, and concludes that these entities are distinct the one from the other. He next claims that the language of M and of Matthew's Markan material indicates the use of a common source, and supports this contention by examining the gaps in M, signs of abridgement in Mark, and Matthew's method in dealing with Q. Much attention is given to the Judaizing controversy in its bearings upon these questions. The question, "Was K a document and what did it contain?" is discussed, and finally a reconstruction of K is made and printed. No less than eight important linguistic tables are given in the Appendix dealing with characteristic expressions in M, in Q, Matthew, and Mark.

Manifestly this complex hypothesis calls for the most careful examination. Whether it is accepted or not, no student of the Synoptic problem can fail to recognize the importance of Professor Parker's scholarly work. To the reviewer his most important result appears to

be the conclusion that M and Q have different origins. About the prior existence of K one must, I think, feel more doubtful. The 95 expressions listed by Hawkins which distinguish the Gospel of Matthew, and 12 more which Professor Parker adds, must owe something to the Evangelist's use of Mark, if the Two-document hypothesis is accepted, and this possibility must affect our estimate of the importance of evidence based on the language of M and Matthew's Markan material. A broader test is the contents of K, as Professor Parker reconstructs this Jewish Christian source. Can we believe that it contained a Birth Story, the account of Peter walking on the water, the blessing pronounced on Peter at Caesarea Philippi, the features peculiar to Matthew's Passion-narrative, including the account of the setting of the guard at the tomb? These and many other questions are raised by the new critical hypothesis. However they are answered, no doubt can exist that Professor Parker has written a work of great value for which we cannot be too grateful.

VINCENT TAYLOR.

KEIGHLEY.

MYTH AND RITUAL IN CHRISTIANITY. By Alan W. Watts. Thames and Hudson. 25s.

Mr Watts was only twenty-one when in 1936 he published *The Spirit of Zen*, an illuminating essay on aspects of Japanese Buddhism. He turned to the study of the Areopagite, translated the mystical theology, and became a priest in the American Episcopal church. His book, *Behold the Spirit*, was warmly praised as a fresh and sensitive study of Eastern and Western spirituality, but *The Supreme Identity* (1950) brought the balance down on the Eastern side. Professor Watts is now "neither a Christian nor a Catholic in any 'party' sense of those words". He does not call himself a Buddhist, but I am impressed by the reality and seriousness of his disbelief in his own personal identity. "When what is remembered is mistaken for what *is*, for reality, we are as confused as if we were trying to drive a car looking *only* into the rear-vision mirror." Therefore penitence involves us in "a maze of illusions" and no historical event can derive any significance from the fact that it happened. To treat "the language of myth as the language of fact" is to rationalize God and degrade him "to the level of a dead, fixed thing, dead because all things are past, inhabiting only the world of memory".

Professor Watts remarks in a footnote that "the Buddha was born miraculously though not, expressly, virginally, though this may be presumed in that he descended from the Tushita heaven, entered the womb of his mother Maya in the form of a glorious white elephant, and was delivered painlessly from her side". In the text his Mariology soars to heights hitherto unscaled, when he writes that "she who was, from the beginning, the Virgin of virgins, and the Immaculate Mother of the universe, appeared in due time as Mary, the daughter of Anna". He sees in her ascending status in the Christian myth the best hope for its future progress.

Much of his book is a commentary on the liturgical texts proper to the seasons from Advent to Pentecost in the Eastern and Western churches, illustrated by photographs and diagrams, sensitive, generally well-informed, and within certain limitations intelligent and illuminating. His mythological interpretation raises important questions for Christian theologians. So far the debate on demythologizing has proceeded on the assumption that the lay mind is informed by a strong sense of the importance of historical fact, and that religious institutions must make sure of their claim to an assured historical foundation. But where the sense of history has worn thin, not only because there are few monuments of earlier periods of time, but because the continuity of personal life is constantly broken by the mobility of habitation, and even of family ties, debates on the historical foundation of institutions may make very little sense, and both Catholic and Protestant Christianity may be in danger of being metamorphosed into mystery religions, in which beliefs provide the dramatic content of rituals for the initiation and renewal of religious experience, either sacramental or enthusiastic. This danger is not confined to America. In England too we have been inclined, since the first beginnings of the industrial period, to develop a mythology of conversion, or of baptism-confirmation, on historical foundations that are not too secure. It is this that we need to demythologize, rather than the "mythology" of the New Testament, which is not mythology for us but rather a challenge to apply ourselves to understand, however imperfectly, the minds of those who were present when once for all the saving deeds were done.

KELHAM. GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND. By J. R. H. Moorman. A. and C. Black. 25s.

"Charity begins but doth not end at home", observed Thomas Fuller; "the same method was embraced in my Church History". Dr Moorman has followed this excellent maxim in his *History of the Church in England*, which fills a very evident gap. The attempts by successive revisions to pour the new wine of subsequent historical studies into the old bottles of Wakeman have reached their end; and Patterson never seriously challenged the supremacy of Wakeman. Hitherto the best short history of the Ecclesia Anglicana has been the Home University Library volume by E. W. Watson with an epilogue by the bishop of Winchester. But Watson presupposed too considerable a knowledge of the outline history of the Church of England to achieve the popularity which he deserved. Now therefore Dr Moorman has stepped into the breach, and has written a new History to redress the balance of the old. Wakeman perhaps saw his theme through the refraction of Tractarian spectacles; but Dr Moorman, though rejecting dry-as-dust impartial and scientific history, has a comprehensive sympathy as well as a catholic churchmanship, which

enable him to thread his way serenely through the controversies of post-reformation centuries particularly.

His book is a miracle of compression and comprehensiveness; for the narrative story of the Church in England from its origins to the last Lambeth Conference is told in 433 pages of text. The smoothness of his record and the ease of its style should not be allowed to obscure the difficulty of the task which he has essayed nor to detract from the success of his achievement. Inevitably in covering so long a period, an author cannot be at his best in all centuries (which does *not* of course mean that he is at his worst in any). Dr Moorman is most at home in the high middle ages, that fecund and formative epoch between the Norman Conquest and the Reformation. This is the period to which his previous historical studies have belonged; and here he is most the master of his theme. On the crucial sixteenth and seventeenth centuries he is good; though perhaps not quite *au fait* with all the recent revaluations of the reformation, nor altogether sympathetic to the Puritan movements. On the nineteenth century he grapples manfully with an overwhelming mass of information, and succeeds with lucidity and succinctness in delineating its chief characteristics. His verdicts on the present century are always interesting and sometimes provocative. Moreover he deserves especial credit for the diversification of his narrative with sketches of the varying standards of public worship, architecture, music, and books of popular devotion and theological learning. Altogether he has written a book which will be of great service.

The reviewer remembers being told by Dr E. W. Watson of his intention to expand his Home University Library sketch into a volume of the proportions of Dr Moorman's present study. But the project tarried and was never realized; chiefly because Dr Watson sought perfection. He confessed that he could not write on the pre-conquest church until the publication of R. H. Hodgkin's two volumes on the Anglo-Saxons; nor on the Wycliffite movement because, not being able to read Czech, he could not assess the precise influence of Wyclif on Huss! The best is ever the enemy of the good; and Dr Moorman has acted wisely in not waiting for perfection. Naturally, his book has its shade as well as its light; and some chapters are not so good as others. Particularly, the volume contains a rather considerable number of minor errors of fact, and some statements which are at variance with the authorities cited in footnotes or recommended at the end of chapters. The informed reader can check these as he proceeds; but they may mislead the neophyte who is seeking only for a *vade mecum* to G.O.E. But these are minor slips, which do not outweigh the solid virtues of the book. Dr Moorman's study will hold its own in Anglican seminaries for a good time to come; it will ease the path of teachers of church history, and delight aspirants to G.O.E. Both author and publisher are to be congratulated on meeting a real need.

Norman Sykes.

Cambridge.

Religious Liberalism in Eighteenth-century England. By Roland N. Stromberg. Oxford University Press. 21s.

Some theologians argue that the less the believer uses his reason the better; others that we cannot truly love God unless we love with all our intellectual strength—with St Paul they say, "In evil be children, in mind be men." Since (it must be assumed) all theologians seek to love all other theologians and to find ground common to all, they will surely welcome any assistance in defining the rights and the limitations of reason in religion. An historical survey or a rounded period in which the battle was joined and some decisions reached is one of the most useful adjuncts to such definition. The rise and decline of English rationalism in the early eighteenth century—here interpreted as beginning about 1690—marks one such period and uncovers the heads of the argument before historical and scientific and critical scholarship arose to confuse the issues and to divert interest into fascinating but less important studies. Moreover, the pronounced insularity of this particular encounter is a further recommendation to the inquiring Englishman. Merely then as an essay in natural theology from Locke to Hume, Mr Stromberg's "modest survey" (his own too modest description) is highly to be commended. It performs a useful task in a businesslike manner, the material is abundant, the outline firm and clear, the diction serviceable. Here is the goodly harvest of immense diligence in the Library of Congress, in the British Museum, and along the dusty shelves of deist and anti-deistic tracts and treatises. A copious bibliography of British and American literature will provide the specialist with ample indications of the by-ways as well as the highways; it is indeed perhaps not ungracious to suggest that some titles would seem to have only the remotest connexion with the main theme.

However, their inclusion is possibly justified by the author's secondary purpose: an evaluation of the effects of the theological debate upon the social and political thought of the nation during the decades preceding the opening of the revolutionary era about 1785. This second part of the scheme, treated all too briefly in three concluding chapters, does justice where justice has not always been done; for instance, in its demonstration that there was religion and piety and philanthropy and even a sort of social idealism in England before the methodist and evangelical revivals and the later democratic radicalism of Priestley and Price and Tom Paine. Deists and Latitudinarians, it appears, though some were time-serving and cynical and superior, were not all crypto-atheists and were as men at least not inferior to the average "orthodox" Tory squire or Whig magnate lamenting the decay of religion among the lower orders. We should also notice some illuminative paragraphs on the influence of British rationalism upon Franklin and other fathers of the American Revolution. These are but subsidiary features of an admirable book, but, like the competent handling of the main theme, they help to make Mr Stromberg's survey a tract for the present times. For, as F. R. Tennant remarked (in 1925), Deism though silenced was not

answered, and quite clearly certain of the issues it raised are or should be matters of urgent argument in our own irrational age.

W. G. Addison.

Britford.

Some Main Problems of Philosophy. By G. E. Moore. Allen and Unwin. 25s.

This book consists of twenty lectures which Prof. Moore delivered at Morley College in London in the winter of 1910–11. A selection from the chapter headings will give an idea of the ground which it covers: "Sense-Data", "Material Things", "Is Time Real?", "The Meaning of 'Real' ", "Being, Fact, and Existence", Truths and Universals". Perhaps it would be fair to say (Prof. Wisdom suggests this in his Foreword) that the two "Main Problems" on which the book centres are those of the external world and of general ideas or "universals".

I think that the reading of the book may be something of a revelation to those who have not grown up inside the recent progressive tradition in British philosophy, which has developed since these lectures were delivered, and which has been based to a large extent upon Moore's own work. It was so to some extent to the present reviewer. Moore treats these problems neither as a technician nor as a hierophant, but subjects them to the gaze of an almost childlike directness and literal-mindedness. Much of the Idealist philosophy previously dominant in Great Britain had depended, I suppose, on the tacit assumption that philosophical assertions are not to be taken *au pied de la lettre*. Moore always takes all assertions *au pied de la lettre*. He has great clarity of thought and expression, and a wonderful power of distinguishing and analysing. He reveals the differences really existing between things which one had contentedly lumped together; and before the reader has finished admiring the distinction drawn, he has gone on to expose a further one within this. He has the scientific "poverty of spirit" which refrains from asserting beyond what has been given it to see. In reading it one understands better the power and energy of recent developments in British philosophy. Something quite powerful might well be based on this foundation.

Moore assumes a definite metaphysical attitude. The task of philosophy for him is, as he explains in his first chapter on "What is Philosophy?", "To give a general description of the *whole* of the Universe, mentioning all the most important kinds of things which we *know* to be in it, considering how far it is likely that there are in it important kinds of things which we do not absolutely *know* to be in it, and also considering the most important ways in which these various kinds of things are related to one another" (p. 1). This task of exploring the *whole* universe seems to be conceived (though Moore himself does not make this comparison) on the analogy of the exploration of the physical universe by the natural sciences. The sciences investigate some constituents of the universe (material objects, e.g.), but philosophy records that there are other classes of

entities besides these—"universals", for example, "facts" or "truths", "sense-data", and "acts of consciousness". All these are "in the Universe", and the business of philosophy is to give an account of *all* the things that are in the Universe. Moore's prosaic matter-of-factness seems here to verge upon quaintness, e.g. when he speaks of the non-physical constituents of the universe as though they were numerable. Thus he speaks of facts as constituting "one of the largest and most important classes of things in the Universe" (p. 296); or again, of the "enormous numbers" of universals of a certain kind which we should have to recognize as being in the Universe, if we accepted a certain argument. He pictures the Universe as an incongruous collection.

"The Universe", he seems to be saying, "is just a collection of 'things'. Not all of them are material things, such as science investigates. There are various other classes of entities, which ordinarily we do not recognize and which it is the philosopher's business to point out; but these other entities are no more mysterious than ordinary concrete things are." There are no mysteries in Moore's universe, only problems; and hence his is a philosophy without wonder. Of course there are for him many facts which are (actually) unknown; but they are of a nature to be known just as thoroughly as those which have been discovered hitherto. They are not such as to exceed our comprehension. This is not to say that Moore might not admit that there may be in the Universe an indefinite number of entities which are entirely out of range of our powers of discovery. It seems to me that he could quite consistently do so, if he thought it worth while. But such an admission would be practically empty; if there are such entities, one can know, and say, nothing about them. The crucial point seems to me not this, but his assumption that whatever is knowable at all is knowable completely. What his philosophy excludes is not so much God (if one were content to think of God as being wholly unknowable), but the *revelation* of God in and through things in the world. What is revealed is a mystery, which is imparted but not mastered. This is what Moore's philosophy does not admit—that truth may be revealed without being comprehended.

It depends with what eyes you look at the universe. Moore assumes that it reveals its true "constitution" to the honest and unprejudiced scrutiny of a mind trained in a certain scientific and logical discipline, and that what is not revealed to such a scrutiny will not be revealed at all. To such a view, mystery is something to be dispelled, and the eye which sees the world as God's creation and the place of divine revelation is not one which has been *opened* to see something fundamental to the constitution of the universe, but one which has not yet been divested of illusions. The question is, which view is right: the view which sees mystery as the remnant of illusion, or that which sees it as fundamental to reality? Prof. Moore does not raise this question, because (I think) the second alternative is not for him a live option.

Present-day Linguistic Empiricism seems to have inherited very much from Moore's philosophy. It shares the same philosophical temper, the same hatred of unclarity and pretentiousness, and is

guided by the same assumption that there is no mystery. (Is there nevertheless some change of temper here, so that what in Moore is a tranquil assurance that there is no mystery becomes in some later writers something more like a resolve that there shall be none?) No doubt Linguistic Empiricism has rejected Moore's metaphysics (since it rejects all metaphysics); there is no more talk about the constituents of the Universe, and the strange entities with which Moore peopled it are dismissed. But its character has probably been in part determined by the fact that *this* was the metaphysics in which most of its representatives had grown up, so that when they came to divest themselves of metaphysics it was *this* metaphysics against which they turned (metaphysics meant peopling the universe with strange entities in response to the supposed requirements of logic). But besides this, one can often see in Moore anticipations of later developments. Indeed, considering the early date of these lectures, it is surely remarkable how much is anticipated. The doctrine of analysis is clearly stated (pp. 204–7, 216–24, 266–9); the method of linguistic analysis is constantly used (e.g. p. 80: "In the sense in which we commonly use the word 'know', when we talk of knowing propositions to be true, you certainly do *not* know it if it is false"), and although it is used as a means to arguing to a metaphysical conclusion, it is not perhaps a very long step to the dropping of the metaphysical conclusion and pursuing the analysis for its own sake; and Moore's appeal to "Common Sense" often almost passes over into the appeal to "Ordinary Language".

In treating of other philosophers, Moore's methods are unhistorical (this also is typical of some of his successors). He often deals with them anonymously and in droves: e.g. "many philosophers have held ","the vast majority of philosophers have adopted the following views". His method is to construct a disjunction of the possible views on the basis of his own philosophy and in his own terminology, and then to assume that all previous philosophers must fit into one or other of the pigeon-holes. The lack of history seems to me an impoverishment of philosophy in an essential respect; but I am bound to add that it does not prevent Prof. Moore from writing a masterly and clarifying study of Hume in chapters 5 and 6, or from throwing powerful shafts of light on Kant in chapter 9.

M. B. Foster.

Christ Church,
Oxford.

Philosophers Speak of God. By Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese. Cambridge University Press for University of Chicago Press. 56s. 6d.

This is an anthology on the massive scale. Over 500 double-column pages are devoted to selections from the writings of philosophers of all ages and cultures, in which they speak and reason about God. The selections from each author are preceded by a brief introduction and followed by commentary. It has the characteristic virtues and dangers of any anthology. The writings of more than fifty philosophers are

included. Thus the book can usefully assist the student (for whom it is avowedly designed) by introducing him to the thought of many of the lesser-known as well as many of the more well-known philosophers. On the other hand, the extracts are of necessity brief when compared with the magnitude of the subject; it would be dangerous if they were treated as a sufficient account of each philosopher's thought about God. On this score the advantages are considerable, and the dangers should be comparatively easily avoided.

But the book is more than a mere anthology. In introduction and epilogue, the editors expound and commend their own philosophical doctrine, to which they give the name of "Panentheism". It is represented as providing a synthesis between classical theism and pantheism—a synthesis which transcends the shortcomings of both. The attempt is made to classify all theistic doctrines, and to show that Panentheism is logically the most complete. The classification is claimed to provide a "mathematics of the theistic possibilities" and to show "in some formally exact way what the possibilities are" (p. 499). This is an unwarrantably confident claim. The rich variety of man's thought about God is clearly not capable of such mathematical classification. Nor is the fact that Panentheism is represented as giving a positive answer to the five categories of classification (Is God eternal? Is he temporal? Is he conscious? Does he know the world? Does he include the world?) any serious evidence for its truth.

The driving force of the editors' criticisms of classical theism lies in their objection to the concept of the immutability and impassibility of God. And here they are surely justified; the attempt to combine such a view of God with a revelation centring on the cross has bedevilled Christian philosophy down the ages and was doomed to failure from the outset. But their own treatment of the problem of evil is hardly satisfactory. Wickedness, it is asserted, is not in the divine "character" at all, but the wickedness of individuals falls within God. Thus the doctrine, it is claimed, is differentiated from classical pantheism by the varying ways in which the different aspects of the world are included in God. Thus God includes the world, but in the absolute aspect of his dipolar nature he does not include it (p. 15). Either the word "God" or the word "include" is being given an elasticity of meaning, which corrodes it of all meaning.

The demonstration of the truth of Panentheism is the overriding purpose of the book. It has not only determined the arrangement and classification of the selected authors, but has also determined the particular passages selected. Thus Von Hügel, who is the final representative of classical theism, is represented by extracts from a single address on "Suffering and God". It also colours the commentaries that follow. Thus a brief and somewhat surprising selection of extracts from the Judeo-Christian Scriptures is followed by a commentary which begins "How far can panentheism be discerned in the foregoing passages?" It is not surprising that the passionately convinced eye of the editors finds it there and in many other places also.

Ridley Hall,
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Maurice Wiles.

THE EMPEROR'S CLOTHES. By Kathleen Nott. Heinemann. 18s.

Miss Nott, to go by her publishers, has in this volume a "brilliantly witty style" and "shows the pseudo-religious revival for what it is—an attempt to persuade the age to disregard the evidence of its own eyes". If the publishers were right, and if too ideas aroused the least interest anywhere between Berwick-on-Tweed and Land's End, her book would prove the gold-mine of many a rattling sermon. The discussion groups and the study groups of parochial youth clubs would try their teeth upon it, and our equivalents of *Études* and *La Vie intellectuelle* would carve it into sanguinary morsels to fling at our full-grown and more refined lions and tigers. The hot gospellers of "the pseudo-religious revival" turn out to be Mr Eliot, Mr C. S. Lewis, Miss D. L. Sayers, and Mr Graham Greene, every one unquestionably a writer now in vogue. It is they whom Miss Nott, in her opening chapter, promises to expose, they and their alleged efforts to get people to abandon reason in favour of faith and so return to church-going. The whole dastardly undertaking began, it appears, with T. E. Hulme, who, in pre-1914 days, swaggered around proclaiming "the doctrine of Original Sin". One chapter also is devoted to *The Seventeenth-Century Background*, a book which Mr Basil Willey put out twenty years ago. The error of these various writers as disclosed by Miss Nott is their refusal to recognize that science yields real knowledge. It would seem accordingly that in her pages some classy dialectical jousting was in prospect, and that, once her chosen adversaries were all unhorsed, we readers (if we had the least interest in ideas) might be stimulated to enter the lists in our turn, so that she also should have a chance of biting the sand and the proceedings attain a happy ending.

Unfortunately, not only are we in England indifferent to ideas, but *The Emperor's Clothes* becomes on examination only a parody of the provocative book which it looked like being. In fact, it is the sort of book about ideas which our indifference to ideas makes us deserve. Miss Nott is plainly a most superior person; for she says—in the chapter entitled, in her "brilliantly witty style", "The Dogma in the Manger"—that she is "well aware that the perceptions of Mr Lewis and Miss Sayers, either of life or literature, are immeasurably coarser than Mr Eliot's". Yet in spite of the superiority which her well-awareness implies, it has to be said with all respect and delicacy that in most of her dissents from passages of Mr Eliot's writings which she quotes, she merely misunderstands him, whether he happens to refer to the orthodoxy of James Joyce, the Satanism of Baudelaire, or the dogmatizing of popular science. Nor is that the only deficiency which she exhibits. While complaining that others are constantly "hypostasizing", she is prone to that rhetorical device herself, as where she says, "controlled by an ever-developing human experience". Another word which she overworks is "semantics", and she is inclined to overrate the probative value of "verification". She laments that the targets of her attack should "dogmatize" a lot, but so does she. For instance, she says that Miss Sayers thinks that there is reason in the universe. I may add that the late Maurice Blondel, the French

Catholic philosopher, wrote a book purporting to show that there is. Hence it would be civil of her to refute them both rather than merely to assert in high and mighty manner that there isn't.

May I confess that I personally am disappointed to find that altogether she has done poorly? I once tried my hand at a book like hers, dealing, however, with writers who were against Christian morality. What a pity, if I may say so, that Miss Nott has not had the advantage of consulting it! She might then have grasped that Bertrand Russell and psychology are not quite tantamount, as she imagines, to the tables of the law. Not that she is anti-Christian, mind you; only anti-ecclesiastical. In the chapter entitled "Lord Peter Views the Soul"—and from which Wimseycally Lord Peter is completely absent —she makes that plain. She says—"dogmatically" again, I am afraid —that "the statements of Christ were in general sound observational truths". Mr Lewis and Miss Sayers can cheer up. They and their "coarse perceptions" are patronized in loftiest company.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

SHORTER NOTICES

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES. By C. H. Dodd. Manchester University Press. 16s.

Eight essays published by Dr Dodd between 1932 and 1950 in various journals here appear with no more than minor alterations and the correction of a few misprints (though a few of these still remain, e.g. on p. 25, l. 8; p. 38, l. 30). Only two of the eight are at all widely known, however: first, Dr Dodd's defence of the Marcan order as a genuine chronological outline, which we are often referred to but have possibly not yet read, because hitherto it has lain tucked away among the back numbers of the *Expository Times*; and secondly an investigation into the idea in the New Testament of the Natural Law, which will be remembered by those who were taking THEOLOGY in 1946. Of the remaining essays, one on Matthew and Paul suggests that in spite of their superficial dissimilarity ("Go nowhere among the Gentiles", "the Gentiles are fellow-heirs"), both writers have in fact much in common. The eschatology of each posits a kingdom of Christ before the kingdom of God the Father; both speak of disciplinary action carried out by the Church under apostolic authority; the Pauline doctrine of the Body is implied by Matt. 25. 40; and both bring similar charges against contemporary Judaism (Rom. 2 and Matt. 23, etc.).

The central section of the book is a brilliant essay, in two parts, on "The Mind of Paul", and it is hard to think of any brief introduction to the corpus of Pauline epistles which has been done better —even if one hesitates to agree that St Paul revised his eschatology as thoroughly as is here strongly urged. This essay includes a demolition of the theory of an Ephesian imprisonment (during which the Captivity epistles were allegedly written) which is just about as

masterly a piece of argumentation as one would ever hope to read. By contrast, the concluding essay, on Eternal Life, which Dr Dodd had promised us in his *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (page 150 n.), disappoints by adding little that is strictly new.

WILFRID BROWNING.

CUDDESDON COLLEGE,
OXFORD.

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND. Vol. II (*Religio Depopulata*). By Philip Hughes. Hollis and Carter. 42s.

The second volume of Fr Hughes's history of the English Reformation covers the period from 1540 to the death of Mary, and it is a sufficient commendation to say that it maintains the high standard of scholarship, interest, literary skill, and honesty of approach set in the first volume. It is necessary as well as good that we should sometimes be enabled to see events through other eyes, and it the peculiar merit of Fr Hughes's study that Roman Catholics and Anglicans alike can learn from it the other side to the familiar happenings and controversies of the time. Almost every page sets something or someone in a fresh light, and many of the footnotes are no less illuminating than the text.

Fr Hughes, of course, is not and does not pretend to be impartial; nor do we expect him to be. He is accurate and scrupulously fair in his presentation of the facts, but he does not attempt to conceal the standpoint from which he writes. He sees the Reformation as the rejection of the "old religion" in favour of an heretical system which denied articles of faith such as the papal supremacy and substituted "private" interpretation of Scripture for the authority of the teaching Church. This prevents him from doing adequate justice to an authentic spiritual movement of great power, and a signal judgment upon the contemporary Church. And it is open to question whether the principles and issues which seem so clear to a modern Roman Catholic were at all points equally clear to the men of the pre-Tridentine era.

Nevertheless, there are many very valuable features in Fr Hughes's book. To instance a few: he makes a judicious and scholarly estimate of the value of Foxe as a chronicler; he gives a clear account of the political complications which lay behind, and hindered, Mary's attempt to restore the old faith; and he describes in adequate detail, and with a full sense of their importance, the struggles for supremacy among the Marian exiles. Perhaps the most unexpected feature is his treatment of the persecutions; not only does he show the readiness of the Reformers to attempt what Mary's government accomplished, but he sets the fires of Smithfield in an entirely new perspective.

A third volume is promised, and it is much to be hoped that Fr Hughes will extend his great work into the seventeenth century. The Jacobean and Caroline divines defended the Anglican Church, not only as reformed, but also as Catholic, and it cannot be written down simply as the creation of Henry VIII, Cranmer, and Elizabeth. The

troubles begun at Frankfort, it has been said, were not brought to an end until at least a century later.

SHERWIN BAILEY.

BIRMINGHAM.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.)

CASTERMAN (TOURNAI): R. Aubert, *La théologie catholique au milieu du XX^e siècle* (39 fr.); G. Philips, *Le rôle du laïcat dans l'Église* (84 fr.).

FAITH PRESS: Maurice B. Reckitt, *The World and the Faith* (10s. 6d.).

GLEERUP (LUND): Leif Eeg-Olofsson, *The Conception of the Inner Light in Robert Barclay's Theology* (20:—).

GOTTHELF-VERLAG (ZÜRICH): Martin Schmidt, *John Wesley*, Vol. I (Swiss Fr. 17.15).

INDUSTRIAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Task is Yours*; Bishop of London, *The Kingdom of Heaven in relation to social and cultural life* (6d. each).

LUTTERWORTH PRESS: Karl Ludvig Reichelt, *Meditation and Piety in the Far East* (17s. 6d.); Emil Brunner, *Eternal Hope* (18s.); W. J. Kooiman, *By Faith Alone—The Life of Martin Luther* (18s.).

MOWBRAY: Father Andrew, S.D.C., *The Seven Words from the Cross* (3s. 6d.); Sister Frances, *Nonsuch—Poems from a Novice's Attic* (5s.); Father Andrew, S.D.C., *The Romance of Redemption* (5s.); A Religious of C.S.M.V. (Ed.), *The Meditations of William of St Thierry* (7s. 6d.); Elizabeth C. Fenn (Ed.), *Meditations and Devotions from the Writings of François de Fénelon* (3s. 6d.); Elisabeth Stopp (Trans.), *Of Cleaving to God* (2s. 6d.).

MOWBRAY (FOR THE ALCUIN CLUB): J. H. Srawley, *The Liturgical Movement* (4s.).

NATIONAL SOCIETY AND S.P.C.K.: Gordon Huelin, *The Steep Ascent of Heaven* (4s.).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PRESS: *Christian Pamphlets: a select bibliography*, List 6: 1953–54 (6d.). [Invaluable to all who are responsible for tract cases and bookstalls.]

ROCKLIFF: Albert D. Belden, *The Practice of Prayer* (6s.).

S.C.M. PRESS: T. Price, *Christianity and Race Relations* (4s. 6d.); S. L. Greenslade, *Church and State from Constantine to Theodosius* (7s. 6d.); Hugh Martin, *Puritanism and Richard Baxter* (15s.); G. Ernest Wright, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man in Society* (7s.); A. M. Chirgwin, *The Bible in World Evangelism* (5s.).

SHEED AND WARD: Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Thérèse of Lisieux* (16s.); B. C. Butler, *The Church and Infallibility* (12s. 6d.).

S.P.C.K.: A. L. Maycock, *Chronicles of Little Gidding* (12s. 6d.); M. A. C. Warren, *Road to Renewal* (1s. 6d.); E. G. Jay, *Origen's Treatise on Prayer* (27s. 6d.); W. G. Peck, *After Thirty Years* (1s.); *Resolutions and Regulations passed by the Convocations of Canterbury and York on certain matters of General and Pastoral Importance* (9d.); J. Clifford Gill, *Worship* (2s. 6d.); J. Clifford Gill, *Christian Conduct* (2s. 6d.).

S.P.C.K. (FOR THE CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY): W. H. Frere and C. E. Douglas (Ed.), *Puritan Manifestoes* (21s.).

TYNDALE PRESS: Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (18s. 6d.).

WILDING AND SON (SHREWSBURY): A. Tindal Hart and Edward Carpenter, *The Nineteenth-Century Country Parson* (16s.).

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